The Spirit of Love — The Second Part - continued

THE

# SECOND DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

## ***Theogenes, Eusebius,*** and ***Theophilus.***

[Love-2.2-1] ***Eusebius***. There is no Occasion to resume any Thing of our Yesterday's Discourse. The following Propositions are sufficiently proved.

[Love-2.2-2] ***First***, That God is an abyssal Infinity of Love, Wisdom, and Goodness; that He ever was, and ever will be one and the same unchangeable ***Will to all Goodness and Works of Love,*** as incapable of any ***Sensibility*** of Wrath, or acting under it, as of falling into Pain or Darkness, and acting under their Direction.

[Love-2.2-3] ***Secondly***, That all Wrath, Strife, Discord, Hatred, Envy, or Pride, ***&c.***, all Heat and Cold, all Enmity in the Elements, all Thickness, Grossness, and Darkness are Things that have no Existence but in and from the Sphere of fallen Nature.

[Love-2.2-4] ***Thirdly***, That all the Evils of Contrariety and Disorder in fallen Nature are only as so many Materials in the Hands of infinite Love and Wisdom, all made to work in their different Ways, as far as is possible, to one and the same End, ***viz.,*** to turn temporal Evil into eternal Good.

[Love-2.2-5] So that whether you look at Light or Darkness, at Night or Day, at Fire or Water, at Heaven or Earth, at Life or Death, at Prosperity or Adversity, at blasting Winds or heavenly Dews, at Sickness or Health, you see nothing but ***such a State*** of Things, in and through which, the ***supernatural*** Deity ***wills*** and ***seeks*** the Restoration of fallen Nature and Creature to their first Perfection.

[Love-2.2-6] It now only remains, that the Doctrine of Scripture concerning the

***Atonement,*** necessary to be made by the Life, Sufferings, and Death of Christ be explained, or in other Words, the true Meaning of that ***Righteousness*** or ***Justice*** of God, that must have Satisfaction done to it, before Man can be reconciled to God.

[Love-2.2-7] For this Doctrine is thought by some to favour the Opinion of a ***Wrath*** and Resentment in the Deity itself.

[Love-2.2-8] ***Theophilus***. This Doctrine, ***Eusebius***, of the Atonement made by Christ, and the absolute Necessity and real Efficacy of it, to ***satisfy*** the Righteousness, or Justice of God, is the very Ground and Foundation of Christian Redemption, and the Life and Strength of every Part of it. But then, this very Doctrine is so far from favouring the Opinion of a Wrath in the Deity itself, that it is an absolute full Denial of it, and the strongest of Demonstrations, that the Wrath, or Resentment, that is to be pacified or atoned, cannot possibly be in the Deity itself.

[Love-2.2-9] For this Wrath that is to be ***atoned*** and ***pacified*** is, in its whole Nature, nothing else but ***Sin***, or ***Disorder*** in the Creature. And when Sin is ***extinguished*** in the Creature, all the Wrath that is ***between*** God and the Creature is ***fully atoned***. Search all the Bible, from one End to the other, and you will find, that the Atonement of ***that*** which is called the Divine Wrath or Justice, and the ***extinguishing*** of Sin in the Creature, are only different Expressions for ***one and the same*** individual Thing. And therefore, unless you will place Sin in God, that Wrath, that is to be atoned or pacified, cannot be placed in Him.

[Love-2.2-10] The whole Nature of our Redemption has no other End, but to remove or extinguish the Wrath that is between God and Man. When this is removed, Man is ***reconciled*** to God. Therefore, ***where*** the Wrath is, or where ***that*** is which wants to be atoned, ***there*** is that which is the ***blamable Cause*** of the Separation between God and Man; ***there*** is that which Christ came into the World to extinguish, to quench, or atone. If, therefore, this Wrath, which is the ***blamable Cause*** of the Separation between God and Man, is in God Himself, if Christ died to atone, or extinguish a Wrath that was got into the holy Deity itself, then it must be said, that Christ made an Atonement for God, and not for Man; that He died for the Good and Benefit of God, and not of Man; and that which is called ***our Redemption,*** ought rather to be called the Redemption of God, as saving and delivering Him, and not Man, from his ***own Wrath***.

[Love-2.2-11] This Blasphemy is unavoidable, if you suppose ***that*** Wrath, for which Christ died, to be a Wrath in God Himself.

[Love-2.2-12] ***Again***, The very Nature of ***Atonement*** absolutely shows, that ***that*** which is to be atoned cannot possibly be in God, nor even in any good Being. For Atonement implies the ***Alteration,*** or Removal of something that is not as it ought to be. And therefore, every Creature, so long as it is good, and has its ***proper State*** of Goodness, neither wants, nor can admit of any Atonement, because it has nothing in it that wants to be ***altered*** or ***taken out*** of it. And therefore, Atonement cannot possibly have any Place in God, because nothing in God either wants, or can receive Alteration; neither can it have Place in any Creature, but so far as it has lost, or altered ***that*** which it had from God, and is fallen into Disorder; and then, that which brings this Creature back to its first State, which alters that which is wrong in it, and takes its Evil out of it, is its ***true*** and ***proper Atonement***.

[Love-2.2-13] ***Water*** is the proper Atonement of the Rage of Fire; and that which ***changes*** a Tempest into a Calm is its true Atonement. And, therefore, as sure as Christ is a ***Propitiation*** and ***Atonement***, so sure is it, that ***that*** which he does, as a Propitiation and Atonement, can have no Place, but in altering that Evil and Disorder which, in the State and Life of the fallen Creature, wants to be altered.

[Love-2.2-14] Suppose the Creature not fallen, and then there is no Room nor Possibility for Atonement; a plain and full Proof, that the Work of Atonement is nothing else but the altering or quenching that which is Evil in the fallen Creature.

[Love-2.2-15] ***Hell, Wrath, Darkness, Misery***, and ***eternal Death,*** mean the same Thing through all Scripture, and these are the only Things from which we want to be redeemed; and where there is nothing of Hell, ***there,*** there is nothing of ***Wrath***, nor any Thing that wants, or can admit of the Benefits of the Atonement made by Christ.

[Love-2.2-16] Either, therefore, all Hell is in the Essence of the holy Deity, or nothing that wants to be atoned by the Merits and Death of Christ, can possibly be in the Deity itself.

[Love-2.2-17] The Apostle saith, that "we are by Nature Children of Wrath"; the same Thing as when the Psalmist saith, "I was shapen in Wickedness, and in Sin hath my Mother conceived me." And therefore, that Wrath which ***wants*** the Atonement of the Sufferings, Blood, and Death of Christ, is no other than that ***Sin***, or ***sinful State,*** in which we are naturally born. But now, if this ***Wrath*** could be supposed to be in the Deity itself, then it would follow, that by ***being by Nature Children of Wrath***, we should thereby be the ***true Children*** of God; we should not want any Atonement, or new Birth from above, to make us

***Partakers of the Divine Nature,*** because that Wrath that was in us would be our dwelling in God and he in us.

[Love-2.2-18] ***Again***, All Scripture teaches us, That God ***wills*** and desires the Removal, or Extinction of ***that Wrath,*** which is ***betwixt*** God and the Creature; and therefore, all Scripture teaches, that the Wrath is not in God; for God cannot will the Removal, or Alteration of any Thing that is in Himself; this is as impossible, as for him to ***will*** the Extinction of his own Omnipotence. Nor can there be any Thing in God, contrary to, or against his own Will; and yet, if God ***wills*** the Extinction of a Wrath that is in Himself, it must be in Him, contrary to, or against his own Will.

[Love-2.2-19] This, I presume, is enough to show you, that the Atonement made by Christ is itself the greatest of all Proofs, that it was not to atone or extinguish any Wrath in the Deity itself; nor, indeed, any Way to affect, or alter any Quality, or Temper in the Divine Mind, but purely and solely to overcome and remove all that Death and Hell, and Wrath, and Darkness, that had opened itself in the Nature, Birth, and Life of fallen Man.

[Love-2.2-20] ***Eusebius***. The Truth of all this is not to be denied. And yet it is as true, that all our Systems of Divinity give quite another Account of this most important Matter. The ***Satisfaction*** of Christ is represented as a Satisfaction made to a wrathful Deity; and the Merits of the Sufferings and Death of Christ, as ***that*** which could only avail with God, to give up his ***own Wrath,*** and think of Mercy toward Man. Nay, what is still worse, if possible, the Ground, and Nature, and Efficacy of this great Transaction between God and Man, is often explained by ***Debtor*** and ***Creditor***: Man, as having contracted a Debt with God that he could not pay, and God, as having a Right to insist upon the Payment of it; and therefore, only to be satisfied by receiving the Death and Sacrifice of Christ, as a valuable Consideration, instead of the Debt that was due to Him from Man.

[Love-2.2-21] ***Theophilus***. Hence you may see, ***Eusebius***, how unreasonably Complaint has been sometimes made against the ***Appeal***, the ***Spirit of Prayer***, ***&c.***, as introducing a Philosophy into the Doctrines of the Gospel, not enough supported by the Letter of Scripture; though every Thing there asserted has been over and over shown to be well grounded on the Letter of Scripture, and necessarily included in the most fundamental Doctrines of the Gospel.

[Love-2.2-22] Yet they who make this Complaint, blindly swallow a Vanity of Philosophy, in the most important part of Gospel Religion, which not only has less Scripture for it than the Infallibility of the Pope, but is directly contrary to the plain Letter of every single Text of Scripture that relates to this Matter: as I will

now show you.

[Love-2.2-23] ***First***, The Apostle saith, "God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that all who believe in Him should not perish but have everlasting Life." What becomes now of the Philosophy of ***Debtor*** and ***Creditor***, of a Satisfaction made by Christ to a Wrath in God? Is it not the grossest of all Fictions, and in full Contrariety to the plain written Word of God? "God so loved the World"; behold the Degree of it? But when did He so love it? Why, before it was redeemed, before He sent or gave his only Son to be the Redeemer of it. Here you see, that all Wrath ***in God, antecedent*** to our Redemption, or the Sacrifice of Christ for us, is utterly excluded; there is no Possibility for the Supposition of it, it is as absolutely denied as Words can do it. And therefore the infinite Love, Mercy, and Compassion of God toward fallen Man, are not ***purchased***, or ***procured*** for us by the Death of Christ, but the Incarnation and Sufferings of Christ come from, and are given to us by the infinite ***antecedent*** Love of God for us, and are the gracious Effects of his own Love and Goodness toward us.

[Love-2.2-24] It is needless to show you, how constantly this same Doctrine is asserted and repeated by all the Apostles.

[Love-2.2-25] Thus says St. John again, "In this was manifested the Love of God toward us, because he sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him." Again, "this is the Record, that God hath given unto us eternal Life; and this Life is in his Son." Again, "God," saith St. Paul, "was in Christ, reconciling the World unto Himself, not imputing their Trespasses to them." Which is repeated, and further opened in these Words, "Giving Thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, who hath delivered us from the Power of Darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1:12-13). And again, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places in Christ" (Eph. 1:3).

[Love-2.2-26] How great therefore, ***Eusebius***, is the Error, how total the Disregard of Scripture, and how vain the Philosophy, which talks of a Wrath in God ***antecedent*** to our Redemption, or of a Debt which he could not forgive us, till he had received a ***Valuable Consideration*** for it, when all Scriptures from Page to Page tells us, that all the Mercy and Blessing and Benefits of Christ, as our Saviour, are the ***free antecedent*** Gift of God Himself to us, and bestowed upon us for no other Reason, from no other Motive, but the Infinity of his own Love toward us, agreeable to what the Evangelical Prophet saith of God, "I am He that blotteth out Transgressions for my own sake" (Isa. 43:25), that is, not for any Reason or Motive that can be laid before me but because I am Love itself,

and my own Nature is my immutable Reason why nothing but Works of Love, Blessing, and Goodness, can come from me.

[Love-2.2-27] Look we now at the Scripture Account of the Nature of the Atonement and Satisfaction of Christ, and this will further show us, that it is not to atone, or alter any ***Quality*** or ***Temper*** in the Divine Mind, nor for the Sake of God, but purely and solely to atone, to quench, and overcome that Death, and Wrath, and Hell, under the Power of which Man was fallen.

[Love-2.2-28] "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." This is the whole ***Work***, the whole ***Nature***, and the sole ***End*** of Christ's Sacrifice of Himself; and there is not a Syllable in Scripture, that gives you any other account of it. It all consists, from the Beginning to the End, in carrying on the one Work of ***Regeneration***; and therefore the Apostle saith, "The first Adam was made a living Soul, but the last or Second Adam was made a Quickening Spirit," because sent into the World by God to quicken and revive that Life from above which we lost in ***Adam***. And he is called our ***Ransom***, our ***Atonement***, ***&c.***, for no other Reason, but because that which He did and suffered in our fallen Nature, was as truly an ***efficacious Means*** of our being born again to a new heavenly Life, of Him, and from Him, as that which ***Adam*** did, was the ***true*** and ***natural Cause*** of our being born in Sin, and the Impurity of bestial Flesh and Blood.

[Love-2.2-29] And as ***Adam,*** by what He did, may be truly said to have ***purchased*** our Misery and Corruption, to have ***bought*** Death for us, and to have ***sold*** us into a Slavery under the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, though all that we have from him, or suffer by him, is only the ***inward working of his own Nature and Life within us***, so, according to the plain meaning of the Words, Christ may be said to be our ***Price***, our ***Ransom***, and ***Atonement***; though all that He does for us, as Buying, Ransoming, and Redeeming us, is done wholly and solely by a Birth of his ***own Nature and Spirit*** brought to Life in us.

[Love-2.2-30] The apostle saith, "Christ died for our Sins." Thence it is, that He is the great Sacrifice for Sin and its true Atonement. But how and why is he so? The Apostle tells you in these Words, "The Sting of Death is Sin;— but Thanks be to God, who giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"; and therefore Christ is the Atonement of our Sins when, by and from Him, living in us, we have Victory over our sinful Nature.

[Love-2.2-31] The Scriptures frequently say, Christ ***gave himself for us***. But what is the full Meaning, Effect, and Benefit, of his thus ***giving Himself for us***? The Apostle puts this out of all Doubt, when he says, "Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify to Himself a

peculiar People;—that He might deliver us from this present World,—from the Curse of the Law,—from the Power of Satan,— from the Wrath to come"; or as the Apostle saith in other Words, "that He might be made unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, and Sanctification."

[Love-2.2-32] The whole Truth therefore of the Matter is plainly this. Christ given ***for us,*** is neither more nor less, than Christ given ***into us***. And he is in no other Sense, our full, perfect, and sufficient Atonement, than as his Nature and Spirit are born, and formed in us, which so purgeth us from our Sins, that we are thereby in Him, and by Him dwelling in us, become new Creatures, having our Conversation in Heaven.

[Love-2.2-33] As ***Adam*** is truly our ***Defilement*** and ***Impurity,*** by his Birth in us, so Christ is our ***Atonement*** and ***Purification,*** by our being born again of Him, and having thereby quickened and revived in us that first Divine Life, which was extinguished in ***Adam***. And therefore, as ***Adam purchased*** Death for us, just so in the same Manner, in the same Degree, and in the same Sense, Christ ***purchases*** Life for us. And each of them only, and solely by their ***own inward Life*** within us.

[Love-2.2-34] This is the one Scripture Account of the whole Nature, the sole End, and full Efficacy of all that Christ did, and suffered for us. It is all comprehended in these two Texts of Scripture: (1) "That Christ was manifested to destroy the Works of the Devil; (2) That as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." From the Beginning to the End of Christ's atoning Work, no other Power is ascribed to it, nothing else is intended by it, as an ***Appeaser*** of Wrath, but the destroying of all that in Man which comes from the Devil; no other ***Merits***, or ***Value***, or infinite ***Worth,*** than that of its infinite Ability, and Sufficiency to ***quicken again*** in all human Nature, that Heavenly Life that died in ***Adam***.

[Love-2.2-35] ***Eusebius***. Though all that is here said seems to have both the Letter and the Spirit of Scripture on its Side, yet I am afraid it will be thought not enough to assert the infinite Value and Merits of our Saviour's Sufferings. For it is the common Opinion of Doctors that the Righteousness or Justice of God must have Satisfaction done to it; And that nothing could avail with God, as a Satisfaction, but the infinite Worth and Value of the Sufferings of Christ.

[Love-2.2-36] ***Theophilus***. It is true, ***Eusebius***, that this is often, and almost always thus asserted in human Writers, but it is neither the Language nor the Doctrine of Scripture.

[Love-2.2-37] Not a Word is there said of a Righteousness or Justice as an ***Attribute in God,*** that must be satisfied; or that the Sacrifice of Christ, is that which satisfies the Righteousness that is in God Himself.

[Love-2.2-38] It has been sufficiently proved to you, that God wanted not to be reconciled to fallen Man; that He never was anything else toward him but Love; and that his Love brought forth the whole Scheme of his Redemption. Thence it is, that the Scriptures do not say that Christ came into the World to procure us the Divine Favour and good Will, in order to put a Stop to ***antecedent*** righteous Wrath in God toward us. No, the Reverse of all this is the Truth, ***viz.,*** that Christ and his whole mediatorial Office came ***purely*** and ***solely*** from God, already so reconciled to us, as to bestow an Infinity of Love upon us. "The God of all Grace," saith the Apostle, "who hath called us to his eternal Glory by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 5:10). Here you see, Christ is not the ***Cause*** or ***Motive*** of God's Mercy toward fallen Man, but God's ***own Love*** for us, his ***own Desire*** of our eternal Glory and Happiness hath for that End given us Christ, that we may be made Partakers of it. The same as when it is again said, "God was in Christ reconciling the World to Himself," that is, calling, and raising it out of its ungodly and miserable State.

[Love-2.2-39] Thus all the Mystery of our Redemption proclaims nothing but a God of Love toward fallen Man. It was the Love of God, that could not behold the Misery of fallen Man, without demanding and calling for his Salvation. It was Love alone, that wanted to have ***full Satisfaction*** done to it, and such a Love as could not be ***satisfied,*** till all that Glory and Happiness that was lost by the Death of ***Adam,*** was fully restored and regained again by the Death of Christ.

[Love-2.2-40] ***Eusebius***. But is there not some good Sense, in which Righteousness or Justice may be said to be ***satisfied*** by the Atonement and Sacrifice of Christ?

[Love-2.2-41] ***Theophilus***. Yes, most certainly there is. But then it is only ***that*** Righteousness or Justice that ***belongs*** to Man, and ought to be ***in him***. Now Righteousness, wherever it is to be, has ***no Mercy*** in itself; it makes ***no Condescensions***; it is ***inflexibly*** rigid; its Demands are ***inexorable***; Prayers, Offerings, and Entreaties have ***no Effect*** upon it; it will have nothing but itself, nor will it ever cease its Demands, or take any Thing ***in lieu*** of them, as a Satisfaction instead of itself. Thus, "Without Holiness," saith the Apostle, "no Man shall see the Lord." And again, "Nothing that is defiled, or impure, can enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." And this is meant by Righteousness being ***rigid*** and having no ***Mercy***; it cannot ***spare***, or have ***Pity***, or hear Entreaty, because all its Demands are righteous, and good, and therefore must be satisfied, or fulfilled.

[Love-2.2-42] Now Righteousness has its ***absolute Demands*** upon Man, because Man was created ***righteous,*** and has lost that ***original*** Righteousness, which he ought to have kept in its first Purity. And this is the ***one, only Righteousness,*** or Justice, which Christ came into the World to ***satisfy***, not by giving some highly valuable Thing as a Satisfaction to it, but by bringing back, or raising up again in all human Nature, that Holiness or Righteousness, which originally ***belonged*** to it. For to ***satisfy*** Righteousness, means neither more nor less than to ***fulfill*** it. Nor can Righteousness ***want*** to have Satisfaction in any Being, but in that Being, which has ***fallen*** from it; nor can it be satisfied, but in restoring or fulfilling Righteousness in that Being, which had departed from it. And therefore the Apostle saith, that "we are created again unto Righteousness in Christ Jesus." And this is the ***one*** and ***only*** Way of Christ's expiating, or taking away the Sins of the World, namely, by restoring to Man his ***lost*** Righteousness. For this End, saith the Scripture, "Christ gave Himself for the Church, that He might sanctify and cleanse it, that he might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having Spot, or Wrinkle, or any such Thing, but that it should be holy and without Blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27).

[Love-2.2-43] This is the one Righteousness, which Christ came into the World to satisfy, by fulfilling it himself, and enabling Man by a new Birth from him to fulfill it. And when all Unrighteousness is removed by Christ from the whole human Nature, then all that Righteousness is satisfied, for the doing of which, Christ poured out his most precious, availing, and meritorious Blood.

[Love-2.2-44] ***Eusebius***. Oh ***Theophilus***, the Ground on which you stand must certainly be true. It so easily, so fully solves all Difficulties and Objections, and enables you to give so plain and solid an Account of every Part of our Redemption. This great Point is so fully cleared up to me, that I do not desire another Word about it.

[Love-2.2-45] ***Theophilus***. However, ***Eusebius***, I will add a Word or two more upon it, that there may be no Room left, either for misunderstanding, or denying what has been just now said of the Nature of that Righteousness, which must have ***full Satisfaction*** done to it by the Atoning and Redeeming Work of Christ. And then you will be fully possessed of these two great Truths. ***First***, That there is no righteous Wrath in the Deity itself, and therefore none to be atoned there. ***Secondly***, That though God is in Himself a mere Infinity of Love, from whom nothing else but Works of Love and Blessing and Goodness can proceed, yet sinful Men are hereby not at all delivered from ***That*** which the Apostle calls the ***Terrors of the Lord***, but that all the ***Threatenings*** of ***Woe, Misery***, and ***Punishment,*** denounced in Scripture against Sin and Sinners, both in this World, and that which is to come, stand all of them in their ***full Force***, and are not in the least Degree ***weakened***, or ***less*** to be dreaded because God is ***all Love***.

[Love-2.2-46] Every Thing that God hath created, is right and just and good in its Kind, and hath its ***own*** Righteousness within itself. The Rectitude of its Nature is its ***only Law***; and it hath no other Righteousness, but that of continuing in its first State. No Creature is subject to any Pain, or Punishment, or Guilt of Sin, but because it has departed from its ***first right*** State, and only does, and can feel the painful Loss of its own first Perfection. And every intelligent Creature, that departs from the State of its Creation, is ***unrighteous***, evil, and full of its ***own Misery***. And there is no Possibility for any disordered, fallen Creature to be free from its ***own Misery*** and ***Pain,*** till it is again in its first State of Perfection. This is the certain and infallible Ground of the absolute Necessity, either of a perfect Holiness in this Life, or of a ***further Purification*** after Death, before Man can enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

[Love-2.2-47] Now this ***Pain*** and ***Misery,*** which is inseparable from the Creature that is not in that State in which it ought to be, and in which it was created, is nothing else but the painful State of the Creature for Want of its ***own proper Righteousness***, as Sickness is the painful State of the Creature for Want of ***its own proper Health.***

[Love-2.2-48] No ***other*** Righteousness, or other Justice, no ***other*** severe Vengeance, demands Satisfaction, or ***torments*** the Sinner, but that very Righteousness, which once was ***in him***, which still ***belongs*** to him, and therefore will not suffer him to have any Rest or Peace, till it is again in him as it was at the first. All, therefore, that Christ does as an ***Atonement*** for Sin, or as a Satisfaction to Righteousness, is all done in, and to, and for Man, and has no other Operation but that of ***renewing*** the fallen Nature of Man, and ***raising*** it up into its first State of ***original Righteousness***. And if this Righteousness, which belongs solely to Man, and wants no Satisfaction, but that of being ***restored*** and ***fulfilled*** in the human Nature, is sometimes called the Righteousness of God, it is only so called, because it is a Righteousness which Man had originally from God, in and by his Creation; and, therefore, as it comes from God, has its whole Nature and Power of Working as it does from God, it may very justly be called God's Righteousness.

[Love-2.2-49] Agreeably to this Way of ascribing that to God, which is only in the ***State*** and ***Condition*** of Man, the Psalmist saith of God, "Thine Arrows stick fast in me, and thy Hand presseth me sore." And yet nothing else, or more is meant by it, than when he saith, "My Sins have taken such Hold of me that I am not able to look up—My Iniquities are gone over my Head, and are like a sore Burden too heavy for me to bear."

[Love-2.2-50] Now, whether you call this State of Man the ***Burden*** of his Sins and Wickednesses, or the ***Arrows*** of the Almighty, and the ***Weight*** of God's Hand, they mean but one and the same Thing, which can only be called by these different Names, for no other Reason but this, because Man's ***own*** original Righteousness, which he had ***from*** God, makes his sinful State a Pain and Torment to him, and lies heavy upon him in every Commission of Sin. And when the Psalmist again saith, "Take thy Plague away from me, I am even consumed by means of thy heavy Hand," it is only praying to be delivered from his ***own Plague***, and praying for the ***same Thing*** as when he saith, in other Words, "Make me a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me."

[Love-2.2-51] Now this Language of Scripture, which teaches us to call the Pains and Torments of our Sins, the ***Arrows, Darts***, and ***Strokes*** of God's Hand upon us, which calls us to own the Power, Presence, and Operation of God, in all that we feel and find in our own inward State, is the Language of the most exalted Piety, and highly suitable to that Scripture which tells us, "That in God we live, and move, and have our Being". For by teaching us to find, and own the Power and Operation of God in every Thing that passes within us, it keeps us continually turned to God for all that we want, and by all that we feel within ourselves, and brings us to this best of all Confessions, that Pain, as well as Peace of Mind, is the Effect and Manifestation of God's infinite Love and Goodness toward us.

[Love-2.2-52] For we could not have this Pain and Sensibility of the Burden of Sin, but because the Love and Goodness of God made us ***originally righteous*** and ***happy***; and therefore, all the Pains and Torments of Sin come from God's ***first Goodness*** toward us, and are in themselves merely and truly the Arrows of his Love, and his blessed Means of drawing us back to that first righteous State in and for which his first and never ceasing Love created us.

[Love-2.2-53] ***Eusebius***. The Matter, therefore, plainly stands thus. There is no ***righteous*** Wrath, or ***vindictive*** Justice in the Deity itself, which, as a ***Quality*** or ***Attribute*** of Resentment in the Divine Mind, ***wants*** to be contented, atoned, or satisfied; but Man's Original ***Righteousness,*** which was once his ***Peace***, and ***Happiness***, and ***Rest*** in God, is by the Fall of ***Adam*** become his ***Tormentor***, his ***Plague***, that continually exercises its ***good Vengeance*** upon him, till it truly regains its first State in him.

[Love-2.2-54] ***Secondly***, Man must be under this ***Pain, Punishment***, and ***Vengeance*** to all Eternity; there is no Possibility, in the Nature of the Thing, for it to be otherwise, though God be all Love, unless Man's lost Righteousness be fully again possessed by him. And, therefore, the Doctrine of God's being all Love, of having no Wrath in Himself, has nothing in it to abate the Force of those Scriptures which threaten Punishment to Sinners, or to make them less fearful of

living and dying in their Sins.

[Love-2.2-55] ***Theophilus***. What you say, ***Eusebius***, is very true; but then it is but half the Truth of this Matter. You should have added, that this Doctrine is the one Ground, and only Reason, why the Scriptures abound with so many Declarations of ***Woe, Misery***, and ***Judgments,*** sometimes executed, and sometimes only threatened by God, and why all Sinners to the End of the World must know and ***feel*** "that the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness, and that Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish, must be upon every Soul of Man that doth Evil" (Rom. 1:18, 2:8-9).

[Love-2.2-56] For all these Things, which the Apostle elsewhere calls "the Terrors of the Lord", have no ***Ground***, nothing that ***calls*** for them, nothing that ***vindicates*** the Fitness and Justice of them, either with Regard to God or Man, but this one Truth, ***viz.,*** That God is in Himself a mere Infinity of Love, from whom nothing but outflowings of Love and Goodness can come forth from Eternity to Eternity. For if God is all Love, if he wills nothing toward fallen Man but his full Deliverance from the blind Slavery and Captivity of his earthly, bestial Nature, then every kind of ***Punishment, Distress***, and ***Affliction,*** that can extinguish the Lusts of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of this Life, may and ***ought*** to be expected from God, merely because he is all Love and good Will toward fallen Man.

[Love-2.2-57] To say, therefore, as some have said, If God is all Love toward fallen Man, how can he ***threaten*** or ***chastise*** Sinners? This is no better than saying, If God is all Goodness in Himself, and towards Man, how can He do that in and to Man, which is for his Good? As absurd as to say, If the able Physician is all Love, Goodness, and good Will toward his Patients, how can he blister, purge, or scarify them, how can he order one to be trepanned, and another to have a Limb cut off? Nay, so absurd is this Reasoning, that if it could be proved, that God had no Chastisement for Sinners, the very Want of this Chastisement would be the greatest of all Proofs, that God was not all Love and Goodness toward Man.

[Love-2.2-58] The meek, merciful, and compassionate Jesus, who had no Errand in this World but to bless and save Mankind, said, "If thy ***right Eye*** or thy ***right Hand*** offend thee, pluck out the one, cut off the other, and cast them from thee." And that He said all this from mere Love, he adds, It is ***better for thee*** to do this, than that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell". Therefore, if the Holy Jesus had been wanting in this Severity, he had been wanting in true Love toward Man.

[Love-2.2-59] And therefore, the pure, mere Love of God, is ***that alone*** from which Sinners are justly to expect from God, that no Sin will pass unpunished, but that his Love will visit them with every Calamity and Distress, that can help to break and purify the bestial Heart of Man, and awaken in him true Repentance and Conversion to God. It is Love alone in the holy Deity, that Will allow no Peace to the wicked, nor ever cease its Judgments, till every Sinner is forced to confess, That it is ***good for him that he has been in Trouble***, and thankfully own, That not the Wrath, but the Love of God, has plucked out that ***right Eye***, cut off that ***right Hand,*** which he ought to have done, but would not do, for himself and his own Salvation.

[Love-2.2-60] Again, this Doctrine that allows of no Wrath in the Divine Mind, but places it all in the Evil State of fallen Nature and Creature, has every Thing in it that can prove to Man the dreadful Nature of Sin, and the absolute Necessity of totally departing from it. It leaves no Room for Self-Delusion, but puts an End to every false Hope, or vain seeking for Relief in any Thing else, but the total Extinction of Sin. And this it effectually does, by showing, that Damnation is no foreign, separate, or imposed State, that is brought in upon us, or adjudged to us by the Will of God, but is the inborn, natural, essential State of our own disordered Nature, which is absolutely impossible, in the Nature of the Thing, to be any Thing else but our ***own Hell,*** both here and hereafter, unless all Sin be separated from us, and Righteousness be again made our natural State, by a Birth of itself in us. And all this, not because God will have it so, by an arbitrary Act of his sovereign Will, but because he cannot change his own Nature, or make any Thing to be happy and blessed, but only that which has its proper Righteousness, and is of one Will and Spirit with Himself.

[Love-2.2-61] If then every Creature that has lost, or is without the true Rectitude of its Nature, must as such, be of all Necessity, absolutely separated from God, and necessarily under the Pain and Misery of a Life that has lost all its own natural Good; if no ***Omnipotence*** or ***Mercy,*** or ***Goodness*** of God, can make it to be otherwise, or give any Relief to the Sinner, but by a total Extinction of Sin by a Birth of Righteousness in the Soul, then it fully appears, that according to this Doctrine, every Thing in God, and Nature, and Creature, calls the Sinner to an absolute Renunciation of all Sin, as the ***one only possible*** Means of Salvation, and leaves no Room for him to deceive himself with the Hopes that any Thing else will do instead of it. Vainly therefore is it said, That if God be all Love, the Sinner is let loose from the dreadful Apprehensions of living and dying in his Sins.

[Love-2.2-62] On the other Hand, deny this Doctrine, and say, with the current of scholastic Divines, That the Sinner must be doomed to eternal Pain and Death, unless a supposed Wrath, in the Mind of the Deity, be first atoned and satisfied;

and that Christ's Death was that valuable Gift, or Offering made to God, by which alone he could be moved to lay aside, or extinguish his own Wrath toward fallen Man; say this, and then you open a wide Door for Licentiousness and Infidelity in some, and superstitious Fears in others.

[Love-2.2-63] For if the Evil, the Misery, and sad Effects of Sin, are placed in a Wrath in the Divine Mind, what can this beget in the Minds of the pious, but superstitious Fears about a supposed Wrath in God which they can never know when it is, or is not, atoned? Every Kind of Superstition has its Birth from this Belief, and cannot well be otherwise. And as to the Licentious, who want to stifle all Fears of gratifying all their Passions, this Doctrine has a natural Tendency to do this for them. For if they are taught, that the Hurt and Misery of Sin, is not its ***own natural*** State, not owing to its ***own Wrath*** and ***Disorder,*** but to a Wrath in the Deity, how easy is it for them to believe, either that God may not be so full of Wrath as is given out, or that he may overcome it himself, and not keep the Sinner eternally in a Misery that is not his own, but wholly brought upon him from without, by a Resentment in the Divine Mind.

[Love-2.2-64] Again, this Account which the ***Schools*** give of the Sacrifice of Christ, made to atone a Wrath in the Deity by the infinite Value of Christ's Death, is that alone which helps ***Socinians, Deists***, and Infidels of all Kinds, to such Cavils and Objections to the Mystery of our Redemption, as neither have, nor can be silenced by the most able Defenders of that scholastic Fiction. The Learning of a ***Grotius*** or ***Stillingfleet,*** when defending such an Account of the Atonement and Satisfaction, rather increases than lessens the Objections to this Mystery: But if you take this Matter as it truly is in itself, ***viz.,*** That God is in Himself all Love and Goodness, therefore can be nothing else but all Love and Goodness toward fallen Man, and that fallen Man is subject to no Pain or Misery, either present or to come, but what is the natural, unavoidable, essential Effect of his own evil and disordered Nature, impossible to be altered by himself, and that the infinite, never ceasing Love of God, has given Jesus Christ in ***all his Process,*** as the highest, and only possible Means, that Heaven and Earth can afford, to save Man from himself, from his own Evil, Misery, and Death, and restore to him his original Divine Life. When you look at this Matter in this true Light, then a God, all Love, and an Atonement for Sin by Christ, not made to pacify a Wrath in God, but to bring forth, fulfill, and restore Righteousness in the Creature that had lost it, has every Thing in it that can make the Providence of God adorable, and the State of Man comfortable.

[Love-2.2-65] Here all Superstition and superstitious Fears are at once totally cut off, and every Work of Piety is turned into a Work of Love. Here every false Hope of every Kind is taken from the ***Licentious***; they have no Ground left to stand upon: Nothing to trust to, as a ***Deliverance*** from Misery, but the ***one total***

Abolition of Sin.

[Love-2.2-66] The ***Socinian*** and the ***Infidel*** are here also robbed of all their Philosophy against this Mystery; for as it is not founded upon, does not teach an ***infinite Resentment,*** that could only be satisfied by an ***infinite Atonement***, as it stands not upon the Ground of Debtor and Creditor, all their Arguments which suppose it to be such, are quite beside the Matter and touch nothing of the Truth of this blessed Mystery. For it is the very Reverse of all this, it declares a God that is all Love; and the Atonement of Christ to be nothing else in itself, but the highest, most natural, and efficacious Means through all the Possibility of Things, that the infinite Love and Wisdom of God could use, to put an End to Sin, and Death, and Hell, and restore to Man his first Divine State or Life. I say, the most natural, efficacious Means through ***all the Possibilities*** of Nature; for there is nothing that is ***supernatural***, however mysterious, in the whole System of our Redemption; every Part of it has its Ground in the Workings and Powers of Nature, and all our Redemption is only Nature set right, or made to be that which it ought to be.

[Love-2.2-67] There is nothing that is ***supernatural,*** but God alone; every Thing besides Him is from and subject to the State of Nature. It can never rise out of it, or have anything contrary to it. No Creature can have either Health or Sickness, Good or Evil, or any State either from God, or itself, but strictly according to the Capacities, Powers, and Workings of Nature.

[Love-2.2-68] The Mystery of our Redemption, though it comes from the supernatural God, has nothing in it but what is done, and to be done, within the Sphere, and according to the Powers of Nature. There is nothing supernatural in it, or belonging to it, but that supernatural Love and Wisdom which brought it forth, presides over it, and will direct it till Christ, as a second ***Adam,*** has removed and extinguished all that Evil, which the first ***Adam*** brought into the human Nature.

[Love-2.2-69] And the whole Process of Jesus Christ, from his being the inspoken ***Word*** or ***Bruiser*** of the Serpent given to ***Adam***, to his Birth, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension into Heaven, has all its Ground and Reason in this, because nothing else in all the Possibilities of Nature, either in Heaven or on Earth, could ***begin***, ***carry*** on, and ***totally*** effect Man's Deliverance from the Evil of his own fallen Nature.

[Love-2.2-70] Thus is Christ the one, full, sufficient Atonement for the Sin of the whole World, because He is the one ***only natural*** Remedy, and ***possible*** Cure of all the Evil that is broken forth in Nature, the one ***only natural Life,*** and

***Resurrection*** of all that Holiness and Happiness that died in ***Adam***. And seeing all this Process of Christ is given to the World, from the supernatural, antecedent, infinite Love of God, therefore it is, that the Apostle saith, "God was in Christ reconciling the World to Himself." And Christ in God, is nothing else in his whole Nature, but that same, ***certain***, and ***natural*** Parent of a Redemption to the whole human Nature, as ***fallen Adam*** was the ***certain*** and ***natural*** Parent of a miserable Life to every Man that is descended from him: With this only Difference, that from fallen ***Adam*** we are born in Sin, whether we will or no, but we cannot have the new Birth which Christ has all Power to bring forth in us, unless the Will of our Heart closes with it.

[Love-2.2-71] But as nothing came to us from ***Adam,*** but according to the Powers of Nature, and because he was that which he was with Relation to us; so it is with Christ and our Redemption by Him: All the Work is grounded in, and proceeds according to the Powers of Nature, or in a Way of natural Efficacy or Fitness to produce its Effects; and every Thing that is found in the Person, Character, and Condition of Christ, is only there as his ***true*** and ***natural*** Qualification to do all that He came to do, in us, and for us. That is to say, Christ was made to be that which He was; He was a ***Seed*** of Life in our first fallen Father; He lived as a ***Blessing of Promise*** in the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Israel of God; He was born as a Man of a pure Virgin; He did all that He did, whether as suffering, dying, conquering, rising, and ascending into Heaven, only as so many Things, which as ***naturally*** and as ***truly***, according to the Nature of Things, qualified Him to be the Producer, or Quickener of a Divine Life in us, as the State and Condition of ***Adam*** qualified him to make us the slavish Children of earthly, bestial Flesh and Blood.

[Love-2.2-72] This is the comfortable Doctrine of our Redemption; nothing in God but an Infinity of Love and Goodness toward our fallen Condition; nothing in Christ, but that which had its ***Necessity*** in the Nature of Things, to make Him able to give, and us to receive, our full Salvation from Him.

[Love-2.2-73] I will now only add, That from the Beginning of Deism, and from the Time of ***Socinus,*** to this Day, not a Socinian or Deist has ever seen or opposed this Mystery in its true State, as is undeniably plain from all their Writings.

[Love-2.2-74] A late Writer, who has as much Knowledge, and Zeal, and Wit in the Cause of Deism, as any of his Predecessors, is forced to attack our Redemption by giving this false Account of it.

[Love-2.2-75] "That a perfectly innocent Being, of the highest Order among

intelligent Natures, should personate the Offender, and suffer in his Place and Stead, in order to take down the Wrath and Resentment of the Deity against the Criminal, and dispose God to show Mercy to him,—the Deist conceives to be both unnatural, and improper, and therefore not to be ascribed to God without Blasphemy."

[Love-2.2-76] ***And again***, "The common Notion of Redemption among Christians seems to represent the Deity in a disagreeable Light, as implacable and revengeful," ***&c.***

[Love-2.2-77] What an Arrow is here, I will not say, shot beside the Mark, but shot at nothing! Because nothing of that, which he accuses is to be found in our Redemption. The God of Christians is so far from being, as he says, ***implacable*** and revengeful, that you have seen it proved from Text to Text, that the whole Form and Manner of our Redemption comes wholly from the free, antecedent, infinite Love and Goodness of God towards fallen Man. That the ***innocent Christ*** did not suffer, to quiet an angry Deity, but merely as ***co-operating, assisting***, and ***uniting*** with that Love of God, which desired our Salvation. That He did not suffer in ***our Place or Stead,*** but only ***on our Account***, which is a quite different Matter. And to say, that He suffered in ***our Place or Stead,*** is as absurd, as contrary to Scripture, as to say, that He rose from the Dead, and Ascended into Heaven in ***our Place and Stead,*** that we might be excused from it. For his Sufferings, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension are all of them equally on ***our Account***, for our Sake, for our Good and Benefit, but none of them possible to be in our Stead.

[Love-2.2-78] And as Scripture and Truth affirm, that He ascended into Heaven ***for us***, though neither Scripture nor Truth will allow it to be in ***our Place and Stead***, so for the same Reasons, it is strictly true, that He suffered, and died ***for us***, though no more in our ***Place*** or ***Stead,*** nor any more desirable to be so, than his Ascension into Heaven for us should be in ***our Place and Stead***.

[Love-2.2-79] I have quoted the above Passage, only to show you, that a Defender of Deism, however acute and ingenious, has not one Objection to the Doctrine of our Redemption, but what is founded on the grossest Ignorance, and total Mistake of the whole Nature of it. But when I lay this gross Ignorance to the Deists′ Charge, I do not mean any natural Dullness, Want of Parts, or Incapacity in them to judge aright, but only that something or other, either Men or Books, or their own Way of Life, has hindered their seeing the true Ground and real Nature of Christianity, as it is in itself.

[Love-2.2-80] ***Eusebius***. I would fain Hope, ***Theophilus***, that from all that has

been said in the ***Demonstration of the Fundamental Errors of the Plain Account***, the ***Appeal to all that doubt, &c.***, and the rest that follow, to these Dialogues; in all which, Christianity and Deism, with their several Merits, are so plainly, and with so much good Will and Affection toward all Unbelievers, represented to them, all that are serious and well-minded amongst the Deists will be prevailed upon to reconsider the Matter. For though some People have been hasty enough to charge those Writings with Fanaticism, or Enthusiasm, as disclaiming the Use of our Reason in Religious Matters, yet this Charge can be made by none, but those who, having not read them, take up with hearsay Censures.

[Love-2.2-81] For in those Books, from the Beginning to the End, nothing is appealed to but the natural Light of the Mind, and the plain, known Nature of Things; no one is led, or desired to go one Step further. The ***Use of Reason*** is not only allowed, but asserted, and proved to be of the ***same Service*** to us in Things of Religion, as in Things that relate to our Senses in this World ***{Demonstration of Errors of the Plain Account}***.

[Love-2.2-82] The true Ground, Nature, and Power of ***Faith*** is opened, by fully proving, that this Saying of Christ, "According to thy Faith, so be it done unto Thee," takes in every Individual of human Nature; and that all Men, whether ***Christians, Deists, Idolaters***, or ***Atheists,*** are all of them equally Men of ***Faith***, all equally, and absolutely governed by it, and therefore must have all that they have, Salvation or Damnation, strictly and solely according to their Faith ***{Way to Divine Knowledge}***. All this is so evidently proved, that I can't help thinking, but that every considerate Reader must be forced to own it.

[Love-2.2-83] ***Theogenes***. All this is well said. But let us now return to the finishing of our main Point, which was to show, that the Doctrine of ***a God all Love,*** does not only not destroy the Necessity of Christ's Death and the infinite Value and Merits of it, but is itself the fullest Proof and strongest Confirmation of both.

[Love-2.2-84] ***Theophilus***. How it could enter into anyone's Head, to charge this Doctrine with destroying the ***Necessity*** and Merits of Christ's Death, is exceeding strange.

[Love-2.2-85] For look where you will, no other Cause, or Reason of the Death of Christ, can be found but in the Love of God toward fallen Man. Nor could the Love of God will or accept of the Death of Christ, but because of its absolute Necessity, and availing Efficacy to do all that for fallen Man, which the Love of God would have to be done for him.

[Love-2.2-86] God did not, could not, love or like or desire the Sufferings and Death of Christ, for what they were in themselves, or as Sufferings of the highest Kind. No, the higher and greater such Sufferings had been, were they only considered in themselves, the less pleasing they had been to a God, that wills nothing but Blessing and Happiness to every Thing capable of it.

[Love-2.2-87] But all that Christ ***was*** and ***did*** and ***suffered*** was infinitely prized, and highly acceptable to the Love of God, because all that Christ was, and did, and suffered in his own Person, was ***That*** which gave him full Power, to be a common Father of Life to all that died in ***Adam***.

[Love-2.2-88] Had Christ wanted anything that he was, or did, or suffered in his own Person, he could not have stood in that Relation to all Mankind as ***Adam*** had done. Had he not been given to the first fallen Man, as ***a Seed of the*** Woman, as a ***Light*** of Life, ***enlightening every Man that comes into the World***, He could not have had ***his Seed*** in every Man, as ***Adam*** had, nor been as universal a Father of Life, as ***Adam*** was of Death. Had he not in the Fitness, or Fullness of Time, become a Man, born of a pure Virgin, the first Seed of Life in every Man, must have lain only as a Seed, and could not have come to the Fullness of the Birth of a new Man in Christ Jesus. For the Children can have no other State of Life, but that which their Father first had. And therefore Christ, as the Father of a regenerated human Race, must first stand in the Fullness of that human State, which was to be derived from him into all his Children.

[Love-2.2-89] This is the absolute Necessity of Christ's being all that he was, ***before*** he became Man; a Necessity arising from the Nature of the Thing. Because he could not possibly have had the Relation of a Father to all Mankind, nor any Power to be a Quickener of a Life of Heaven in them, but because He was both God in himself, and a Seed of God in all of them.

[Love-2.2-90] Now all that Christ was, and did, and suffered, ***after*** He became Man, is from the same Necessity founded in the Nature of the Thing. He suffered on no other Account, but because that which he came to do in, and for the human Nature, was and could be nothing else in itself, but a Work of Sufferings and Death.

[Love-2.2-91] A crooked Line cannot become straight, but by having all its Crookedness given up, or taken from it. And there is but one Way possible in Nature for a crooked Line to lose its Crookedness.

[Love-2.2-92] Now the Sufferings and Death of Christ stand in this kind of Necessity. He was made Man for our Salvation, that is, He took upon Him our

fallen Nature, to bring it out of its ***evil crooked*** State, and set it again in that Rectitude in which it was created.

[Love-2.2-93] Now there was no more two Ways of doing this, than there are two Ways of making a crooked Line to become straight.

[Love-2.2-94] If the Life of fallen Nature, which Christ had taken upon Him, was to be overcome by Him, then every Kind of suffering and dying, that was a giving up, or departing from the Life of fallen Nature, was just as necessary, in the Nature of the Thing, as that the Line to be made straight must give up, and Part with every Kind and Degree of its own Crookedness.

[Love-2.2-95] And therefore the Sufferings and Death of Christ were, in the Nature of the Thing, the only possible Way of his acting contrary to, and overcoming all the Evil that was in the fallen State of Man.

[Love-2.2-96] The Apostle saith, "The Captain of our Salvation was to be made perfect through Sufferings." This was the Ground and Reason of his Sufferings. Had he been without them, He could not have been perfect in Himself, as a ***Son of Man,*** nor the Restorer of Perfection in all Mankind. But why so? Because his Perfection, as a ***Son of Man***, or the Captain of ***human Salvation***, could only consist in his acting in, and with a Spirit suitable to the first created State of perfect Man; that is, He must in his Spirit be as much above all the ***Good*** and ***Evil*** of this fallen World, as the first Man was.

[Love-2.2-97] But now, He could not show that He was of this Spirit, that He was under no Power of fallen Nature, but lived in the Perfection of the first created Man; He could not do this, but by showing, that all the Good of the earthly Life was renounced by Him, and that all the Evil which the World, the Malice of Men and Devils, could bring upon Him, could not hinder his living wholly and solely to God, and doing his Will on Earth with the same Fullness, as Angels do it in Heaven.

[Love-2.2-98] But had there been any Evil in all fallen Nature, whether in Life, Death, or Hell, that had not attacked Him, with ***all its Force***, He could not have been said to have overcome it. And therefore so sure as Christ, the Son of Man, was to overcome the World, Death, Hell, and Satan, so sure is it, that all the Evils which they could ***possibly*** bring upon Him, were to be ***felt*** and ***suffered*** by Him, as absolutely necessary in the Nature of the Thing, to declare his Perfection, and prove his Superiority over them. Surely, my Friend, it is now enough proved to you, how a God all Love toward fallen Man, must love, like, desire, and delight in all the Sufferings of Christ, which alone could enable Him, as a Son of Man, to

undo, and reverse all that Evil, which the first Man had done to all his Posterity.

[Love-2.2-99] ***Eusebius***. Oh, Sir, in what an adorable Light is this Mystery now placed. And yet in no other Light than that in which in the plain Letter of all Scripture sets it. No Wrath in God, no fictitious Atonement, no Folly of Debtor and Creditor, no suffering in Christ for Sufferings' sake, but a Christ suffering and dying, as his ***same Victory*** over Death and Hell, as when He rose from the Dead and ascended into Heaven.

[Love-2.2-100] ***Theophilus***. Sure now, ***Eusebius***, you plainly enough see wherein the infinite Merits, or the availing Efficacy, and glorious Power of the Sufferings and Death of Christ consist; since they were that, in and through which Christ himself came out of the State of fallen Nature, and got Power to give the same Victory to all his Brethren of the human Race.

[Love-2.2-101] Wonder not, therefore, that the Scriptures so frequently ascribe all our Salvation to the Sufferings and Death of Christ, that we are continually referred to them, as the Wounds and Stripes by which we are healed, as the Blood by which we are washed from our Sins, as the Price (much above Gold and precious Stones) by which we are bought.

[Love-2.2-102] Wonder not also that in the Old Testament, its ***Service Sacrifices***, and ***Ceremonies*** were instituted to typify, and point at the great Sacrifice of Christ, and to keep up a continual Hope, strong Expectation, and Belief of it. And that in the New Testament, the Reality, the Benefits, and glorious Effects of Christ our Passover being actually sacrificed for us, are so joyfully repeated by every Apostle.

[Love-2.2-103] It is because Christ, as suffering and dying, was nothing else but Christ conquering and overcoming all the false Good, and the hellish Evil, of the fallen State of Man.

[Love-2.2-104] His Resurrection from the Grave, and Ascension into Heaven, though great in themselves, and necessary Parts of our Deliverance, were yet but the Consequences and genuine Effects of his Sufferings and Death. These were in themselves the Reality of his Conquest; all his great Work was done and effected in them and by them, and his Resurrection and Ascension were only his entering into the Possession of that, which his Sufferings and Death had gained for him.

[Love-2.2-105] Wonder not then, that all the true Followers of Christ, the Saints of every Age, have so gloried in the Cross of Christ, have imputed such great Things to it, have desired nothing so much, as to be Partakers of it, to live in

constant Union with it. It is because his Sufferings, his Death, and Cross, were the ***Fullness*** of his Victory over all the Works of the Devil. Not an ***Evil*** in Flesh and Blood, not a ***Misery*** of Life, not a Chain of Death, not a ***Power*** of Hell and Darkness, but were all baffled, broken, and overcome by the Process of a suffering, and dying Christ. Well therefore may the Cross of Christ be the Glory of Christians.

[Love-2.2-106] ***Eusebius***. This Matter is so solidly and fully cleared up, that I am almost ashamed to ask you any Thing further about it. Yet explain a little more, if you please, how it is, that the Sufferings and Death of Christ, gave Him Power to become a ***common Father*** of Life to all that died in ***Adam***. Or how it is, that we, by Virtue of them, have Victory over all the Evil of our fallen State.

[Love-2.2-107] ***Theophilus***. You are to know, ***Eusebius***, that the Christian Religion is no ***arbitrary System*** of Divine worship, but is the one true, real, and only Religion of Nature; that is, it is wholly founded in the Nature of Things, has nothing in it supernatural or contrary to the Powers and Demands of Nature; but all that it does, is only in, and by, and according to the Workings and Possibilities of Nature.

[Love-2.2-108] A Religion that is not founded in Nature, is all Fiction and Falsity, and as mere a nothing as an ***Idol***. For as no Creature can be, or have any Thing, but what it is and has from the Nature of Things, nor have any Thing done to it, Good or Harm, but according to the unalterable Workings of Nature, so no Religion can be of any Service, but that which works with and according to the Demands of Nature. Nor can any fallen Creature be raised out of its fallen State, even by the Omnipotence of God, but according to the Nature of Things, or the unchangeable Powers of Nature; for Nature is the Opening and Manifestation of the Divine Omnipotence; it is God's ***Power-world***; and therefore all that God doth, is and must be done in and by the Powers of Nature. God, though omnipotent, can give no Existence to any Creature, but it must have that Existence in ***Space*** and ***Time***.— Time cometh out of the ***Eternity***, and Space cometh out of the ***Infinity*** of God—God hath an omnipotent Power over them, in them, and with them, to make both of them set forth and manifest the Wonders of his supernatural Deity. Yet Time can only be subservient to the Omnipotence of God, according to the Nature of Time; and Space can only obey his Will, according to the Nature of Space; but neither of them can, by any Power, be made to be in a supernatural State, or be any Thing but what they are in their own Nature.

[Love-2.2-109] Now Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, True and False, Happiness and Misery, are as unchangeable in Nature, as Time, and Space. And every State and Quality that is creaturely, or that can belong to any Creature, has its own

Nature, as unchangeably as Time and Space have theirs.

[Love-2.2-110] Nothing therefore can be done to any Creature ***supernaturally***, or in a Way that is ***without,*** or ***contrary*** to the Powers of Nature; but every Thing or Creature that is to be helped, that is to have any Good done to it, or any Evil taken out of it, can only have it done so far, as the Powers of Nature are able and rightly directed to effect it.

[Love-2.2-111] And this is the true Ground of all Divine Revelation, or that Help which the supernatural Deity vouchsafes to the fallen State of Man. It is not to appoint an arbitrary System of religious Homage to God, but solely to point out, and provide for Man, blinded by his fallen State, that ***one only*** Religion, that, according to the Nature of Things, can possibly restore to him his lost Perfection. This is the Truth, the Goodness, and the Necessity of the Christian Religion; it is true, and good, and necessary, because it is as much the ***one only natural*** and ***possible*** Way of overcoming all the Evil of fallen Man, as Light is the one only natural, possible Thing that can expel Darkness.

[Love-2.2-112] And therefore it is, that all the Mysteries of the Gospel, however high, are yet true and necessary Parts of the ***one Religion*** of Nature; because they are no higher, nor otherwise, than the ***natural State*** of fallen Man absolutely stands in Need of. His Nature cannot be helped, or raised out of the Evils of its present State, by any Thing less than these Mysteries; and therefore, they are in the same Truth and Justness to be called his ***natural Religion,*** as that ***Remedy*** which alone has full Power to remove all the Evil of a Disease, may be justly called its ***natural Remedy***.

[Love-2.2-113] For a Religion is not to be deemed natural, because it has nothing to do with ***Revelation***; but then is it the ***one true Religion of Nature,*** when it has every Thing in it that our ***natural*** State stands in need of; every Thing that can help us out of our present Evil, and raise and exalt us to all the Happiness which our Nature is capable of having. Supposing, therefore, the Christian scheme of Redemption to be all that, and nothing else in itself, but that which the ***Nature of Things*** absolutely requires it to be, it must, for that very Reason, have its ***Mysteries***.

[Love-2.2-114] For the fallen, corrupt, mortal State of Man, absolutely requires these two Things as its only Salvation. ***First***, the Divine Life, or the Life of God, must be revived in the Soul of Man. ***Secondly***, there must be a Resurrection of the Body in a better State after Death. Now nothing in the Power of Man, or in the Things of this World, can effect this Salvation. If, therefore, this is to be the Salvation of Man, then some Interposition of the Deity is absolutely necessary, in

the Nature of the Thing, or Man can have no Religion that is ***sufficiently natural;*** that is to say, no Religion that is sufficient, or equal to the Wants of his Nature.

[Love-2.2-115] Now this necessary Interposition of the Deity, though doing nothing but in a ***natural*** Way, or according to the Nature of Things, must be mysterious to Man, because it is doing something ***more*** and ***higher*** than his Senses or Reason ever saw done, or possible to be done, either by himself, or any of the Powers of this World.

[Love-2.2-116] And this is the true Ground and Nature of the Mysteries of Christian Redemption. They are, in themselves, nothing else but what the Nature of Things requires them to be, as natural, efficacious Means of our Salvation, and all their Power is in a ***natural Way***, or ***true Fitness*** of Cause for its Effect; but they are mysterious to Man, because brought into the Scheme of our Redemption by the ***Interposition*** of God, to work in a Way and manner above, and superior to all that is seen and done in the Things of the World.

[Love-2.2-117] The Mysteries, therefore, of the Gospel are so far from showing the Gospel not to be the one ***true*** Religion of Nature, that they are the greatest Proof of it, since they are that alone which can help Man to all that good which his ***natural State*** wants to have done to it.

[Love-2.2-118] For instance, if the Salvation of Man absolutely requires the ***Revival*** or ***Restoration*** of the Divine Life in the human Nature, then nothing can be the ***one, sufficient, true*** Religion of Nature, but that which has a natural Power to do this.

[Love-2.2-119] What a Grossness of Error is it, therefore, to blame that Doctrine which asserts the Incarnation of the Son of God, or the Necessity of the Word being made Flesh, when in the Nature of the Thing, nothing else but this very Mystery can be the ***natural, efficacious*** Cause of the Renewal of the Divine Life in the human Nature, or have any natural Efficacy to effect our Salvation?

[Love-2.2-120] Having now, ***Eusebius***, established this Ground, that nothing is, or can be a Part of true, natural Religion, or have any real ***Efficacy,*** as a Means of Salvation, but only that which has its ***Efficacy*** in and from the Nature of Things, or in the ***natural Fitness*** of Cause to produce its Effect, you are brought into the clear View of this Truth, ***viz.,*** That the Religion of ***Deism*** is ***false***, and ***vain***, and ***visionary***, and to be rejected by every Man as the mere ***enthusiastic***, ***fanatic*** Product of pure Imagination; and all for this plain Reason, because it quite disregards the ***Nature*** of Things, stands wholly upon a

***supernatural*** Ground, and goes as much ***above*** and as directly ***contrary*** to the Powers of Nature, as that ***Faith*** that trusts in, and prays to a ***wooden*** God.

[Love-2.2-121] I say not this (as is too commonly done) in the Spirit of Accusation, or to raise an Odium. No, by no Means. I have the utmost Aversion to such a Procedure; I would no more bring a false Charge against the ***Deist,*** than I would bear false Witness against an ***Apostle***. And I desire to have no other Temper, Spirit or Behaviour toward them, but such as the loving God with all my Heart, and loving them as I Love myself, requires of me. And in this Spirit of Love, I charge them with ***visionary*** Faith, and ***enthusiastic*** Religion; and only so far, as I have from Time to Time proved, that they trust to be saved by that, which according to the unchangeable Nature of Things can have no Power of Salvation in it.

[Love-2.2-122] For a Religion, not grounded in the Power and Nature of Things, is ***unnatural***, supernatural, ***superrational***, and is rightly called either ***Enthusiasm, Vision, Fanaticism, Superstition***, or ***Idolatry***, just as you please. For all these are but different Names for one and the same religious Delusion. And every Religion is this Delusion, but that one Religion which is required by, and has its Efficacy in and from the unchangeable Nature of Things.

[Love-2.2-123] And thus stands the Matter betwixt the Deists and myself. If I knew how to do them or the Subject more Justice, I would gladly do it; having no Desire, either for them or myself, but that we may all of us be delivered from every Thing that separates us from God, all equal Sharers of every Blessing that He has for human Nature, all united in that Spirit of Love and Goodness for which he created us, and all blessed with that Faith and Hope to which the God of Love has called us, as the one, only, possible, natural, and full Means of ever finding ourselves saved, and redeemed from all the Evils both of Time and Eternity.

[Love-2.2-124] And now, ***Eusebius***, upon this Ground, ***viz.,*** (1) That there is but one true Religion, and that it is the Religion of Nature. (2) That a Religion has no Pretense to be considered as the Religion of Nature, because it rejects Divine Revelation, and has only human Reason for its Guide, but wholly and solely because it has every Good in it that the ***natural State*** of Man wants, and can receive from Religion. (3) That nothing can be any religious Good, or have any real Efficacy, as a Means of Salvation, but only that which has its Efficacy in and from the natural Power of Things, or the Fitness and Sufficiency of Cause to produce its Effect. (4) That the Religion of the Gospel, in all its Mysteries and Doctrines, is wholly grounded in the natural Powers of Things, and their Fitness to produce their Effects. Upon this Ground I come to answer your Question, ***viz.,*** How it is that the Sufferings and Death of Christ gave Him full Power to become a ***common Father of Life*** to all those that died in ***Adam***? Or how it is that we, by

Virtue of them, are delivered out of all the Evils of our fallen State?

[Love-2.2-125] The Sufferings and Death of Christ have no ***supernatural*** Effect that is above, or contrary to Nature; because the Thing itself is impossible. For a Thing is only therefore impossible, because the Nature of Things will not allow it.

[Love-2.2-126] The Fall of all Mankind in ***Adam*** is no ***supernatural*** Event or Effect, but the natural and necessary Consequence of our Relation to him. Could ***Adam*** at his Fall into this earthly Life have absolutely overcome every Power of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, in the same Spirit as Christ did, he had been his own Redeemer, had risen out of his Fall, and ascended into Paradise, and been the Father of a paradisiacal Offspring, just as Christ, when He had overcome them all, rose from the Dead, and ascended into Heaven. But ***Adam*** did not do this, because it was as impossible, in the Nature of the Thing, as for a Beast to raise itself into an Angel. If therefore Man is to come out of his fallen State, there must be something found out that, according to the Nature of Things, hath Power to effect it. For it can no more be done ***supernaturally*** by any Thing else, than it could by ***Adam***.

[Love-2.2-127] Now the Matter stood thus: The Seed of all Mankind was in the Loins of fallen ***Adam***. This was unalterable in the Nature of the Thing, and therefore all ***Mankind*** must come forth in his fallen State.

[Love-2.2-128] Neither can they ever be in any State whatever, whether earthly or heavenly, but by having an earthly ***Man,*** or a heavenly ***Man*** for their Father. For ***Mankind,*** as such, must of all Necessity be born of, and have that Nature which it hath from a ***Man***. And this is the true Ground, and absolute Necessity of the one Mediator, the ***Man*** Christ Jesus. For seeing ***Mankind,*** as such, must have that Birth and Nature which they have from ***Man***; seeing they never could have had any Relation to Paradise, or any Possibility of partaking of it, but because they had a paradisiacal Man for their Father, nor could have had any Relation to this earthly World, or any Possibility of being born earthly, but because they had an earthly Man for their Father; and seeing all this must be unalterably so forever, it plainly follows, that there was an utter Impossibility for the Seed of ***Adam*** ever to come out of its fallen State, or ever have another or better Life, than they had from Adam, unless ***such a Son of Man*** could be brought into Existence, as had the ***same Relation*** to all Mankind as ***Adam*** had, was as much in them all as ***Adam*** was, and had as full Power according to the ***Nature of Things,*** to give a heavenly Life to all the Seed in ***Adam's*** loins, as ***Adam*** had to bring them forth in earthly Flesh and Blood.

[Love-2.2-129] And now, Sir, that Christ was this very ***Son of Man***, standing in

the ***same Fullness*** of Relation to all Mankind as ***Adam*** did, having ***his Seed*** as really in them all, as Adam had, and as truly and fully qualified, according to the Nature of Things, to be a ***common*** and ***universal*** Father of Life, as ***Adam*** was of Death to all the human Race, shall in a Word or two be made as plain and undeniable, as that two and two are four.

[Love-2.2-130] The Doctrine of our Redemption absolutely asserts, that the ***Seed*** of Christ was sown into the first fallen Father of Mankind, called ***the Seed of the Woman***, the ***Bruiser*** of the Serpent, the ***ingrafted*** Word of Life, called again in the Gospel, ***that Light which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World.*** Therefore Christ was in all Men, in that ***same*** Fullness of Relation of a Father to all Mankind, as the first ***Adam*** was. ***Secondly***, Christ was born of ***Adam's*** Flesh and Blood, took the human Nature upon him, and therefore stood as a human Creature in the ***same Relation*** to Mankind, as ***Adam*** did. Nothing therefore was further wanting in Christ, to make him as truly a ***natural Father of Life*** to all Mankind, as ***Adam*** was at first, but God's Appointment of him to that End.

[Love-2.2-131] For as ***Adam*** could not have been the natural Father of Mankind, but because God created and appointed him for that End, so Christ could not have been the natural Regenerator, or Redeemer of a heavenly Life that was lost in all Mankind, but because God had appointed and brought him into the World for that End. Now that God did this, that Christ came into the World by Divine Appointment, to be the Saviour, the Resurrection and Life of all Mankind, is a Truth as evident from Scripture, as that ***Adam*** was the first Man.

[Love-2.2-132] And thus it appears, in the utmost degree of Plainness and Certainty, that Christ in his ***single Person*** was, according to the Nature of Things, as fully qualified to be a ***common Redeemer,*** as ***Adam*** was, in his single Person, to be a common Father of all Mankind. He had ***his Seed*** in all Mankind, as ***Adam*** had. He had the human Nature, as Adam had. And He had the same Divine Appointment as ***Adam*** had. But Christ, however qualified to be our Redeemer, could not be actually such, till He had gone through, and done all that, by which our Redemption was to be effected.

[Love-2.2-133] ***Adam***, however qualified, yet could not be the Father of a paradisiacal Offspring, till he had stood out his Trial, and fixed Himself victorious over every Thing that could make Trial of Him. In like manner, Christ, however qualified, could not be the Redeemer of all Mankind, till he had also stood out his Trial, had overcome ***all That*** by which ***Adam*** was overcome, and had fixed Himself triumphantly in that Paradise which ***Adam*** had lost.

[Love-2.2-134] Now as Adam's Trial was, Whether he would keep Himself in his paradisiacal State, ***above*** and ***free*** from all that was Good and Evil in this earthly World? So Christ's trial was, Whether, as a ***Son*** of Man, and loaded with the ***Infirmities*** of fallen ***Adam***, sacrificed to all that which the Rage and Malice of the World, Hell, and Devils could possibly do to him; whether He in the midst of all these Evils, could live and die with his Spirit as contrary to them, as much above them, as unhurt by them, as ***Adam*** should have lived in Paradise?

[Love-2.2-135] And then it was, that every Thing which had overcome ***Adam,*** was overcome by Christ; and Christ's Victory did, in the Nature of the Thing, as certainly and fully open an Entrance for Him, and all his Seed into Paradise, as ***Adam's*** Fall cast him and all his Seed into the Prison and Captivity of this earthly, bestial World.

[Love-2.2-136] Nothing ***supernatural*** came to pass in either Case, but Paradise lost, and Paradise regained, according to the Nature of Things, or the real Efficacy of Cause to produce its Effects.

[Love-2.2-137] Thus is your Question fully answered; ***viz.,*** How and why the Sufferings and Death of Christ enabled him to be the Author of Life to all that died in ***Adam***? Just as the Fall of ***Adam*** into this World, under the Power of Sin, Death, Hell, and the Devil, enabled him to be the common Father of Death, or was the natural, unavoidable Cause of our being born under the same Captivity; just so, that Life, and Sufferings, and Death of Christ, which declared his breaking out from them, and Superiority over them, must in the Nature of the Thing as much enable Him to be the common Author of Life, that is, must as certainly be the ***full, natural, efficacious*** Cause of our inheriting Life from Him. Because, by what Christ was in Himself, by what He was in us, by his whole ***State, Character***, and the Divine ***Appointment***, we all had that ***natural Union*** with Him, and Dependence upon Him, as our Head in the Way of Redemption, as we had with ***Adam*** as our Head in the Way of our natural Birth. So that as it must be said, that because ***Adam*** fell, we must of all Necessity be Heirs of his fallen State, so with the same Truth and from the same Necessity of the Thing, it must be said, that because Christ our Head is risen victorious out of our fallen State, we as his Members, and having his Seed within us, must be and are made Heirs of all his Glory. Because in all Respects we are as ***strictly***, as ***intimately*** connected with, and related to Him as the ***one Redeemer,*** as we are to ***Adam*** as the ***one Father*** of all Mankind. So that Christ by his Sufferings and Death become in all of us our Wisdom, our Righteousness, our Justification and Redemption, is the same sober and solid Truth, as ***Adam*** by his Fall become in all of us our Foolishness, our Impurity, our Corruption, and Death.

[Love-2.2-138] And now, my Friends, look back upon all that has been said, and

then tell me, Is it possible more to exalt or magnify the infinite Merits, and availing Efficacy of the ***Sufferings*** and ***Death*** of Christ, than is done by this doctrine? Or whether every Thing that is said of them in Scripture, is not here proved, from the very Nature of the Thing, to be absolutely true? And again, Whether it is not sufficiently proved to you, that the Sufferings and Death of Christ are not only consistent with the Doctrine of a God all Love, but are the fullest and most absolute Proof of it?

[Love-2.2-139] ***Eusebius***. Indeed, ***Theophilus***, you have so fully done for us all that we wanted to have done, that we are now ready to take Leave of you. As for my Part, I want to return Home to enjoy my Bible, and delight myself with reading it in this comfortable Light, in which you have set the whole Ground and Nature of our Redemption. I am now in full Possession of this glorious Truth, that God is ***mere Love***, the most glorious Truth that can possess and edify the Heart of Man. It drives every Evil out of the Soul, and gives Life to every Spark of Goodness that can possibly be kindled in it. Everything in Religion is made amiable, by being a Service of Love to the God of Love.

[Love-2.2-140] No Sacrifices, Sufferings, and Death, have any Place in Religion, but to satisfy and fulfill that Love of God, which could not be satisfied without our Salvation. If the Son of God is not spared, if He is delivered up to the Rage and Malice of Men, Devils, and Hell, it is because, had we not had such a Captain of our Salvation made perfect through Sufferings, it never could have been sung, "Oh Death, where is thy Sting, Oh Grave, where is thy Victory!" It never could have been true, that "as by one Man Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin, so by one Man came the Resurrection of the Dead." It never could have been said " that as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive."

[Love-2.2-141] Therefore, dear ***Theophilus***, adieu. God is Love, and He that hath learnt to live in the Spirit of Love, hath learnt to live and dwell in God. Love was the Beginner of all the Works of God, and from Eternity to Eternity nothing can come from God, but a Variety of Wonders, and Works of Love, over all Nature and Creature.

[Love-2.2-142] ***Theophilus***. God prosper, ***Eusebius***, this Spark of Heaven in your Soul. May it, like the ***Seraphim's Coal taken from the Altar***, purify your Heart from all its Uncleanness. But before you leave me, I beg one more Conversation to be on the ***practical Part*** of the Spirit of Love, that so Doctrine and Practice, hearing and doing, may go Hand in Hand.

## ***The End of the Second*** DIALOGUE

***Continue to next Segment*** **/ /** ***Return to Spirit of Love Index***